



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Jim Barrett (301) 734-6405

Andrea McNally (301) 734-0602

USDA PROPOSES TO AMEND FINAL RULE ON CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE HERD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR CAPTIVE DEER, ELK AND MOOSE

WASHINGTON, March 30, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is proposing changes to a final rule that establishes a herd certification program to eliminate chronic wasting disease (CWD) from farmed or captive cervids in the United States. In the final rule, participating deer, elk and moose herds would have to follow CWD herd certification program requirements for animal identification, testing, herd management and movement of animals into and from herds.

APHIS' proposed changes involve the recognition of state bans on the entry of farmed or captive cervids for reasons unrelated to CWD, the number of years an animal must be monitored for CWD before it may move interstate, interstate movement of cervids that originated from herds in proximity to a CWD outbreak, herd inventory procedures and several other matters. These actions are intended to help eliminate CWD from the farmed or captive cervid herds in the United States.

The proposed rule is in response to petitions and public comments requesting reconsideration of several requirements to the previous final rule. APHIS believes that the comments identified several areas where the CWD final rule could be more effective or less burdensome, and that the CWD final rule could be improved by making several changes to its requirements.

CWD is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) of cervids (members of Cervidae, the deer family) that, as of October 2008, has been found only in wild and captive animals in North America and in captive animals in the Republic of Korea.

First recognized as a clinical "wasting" syndrome in 1967, the disease is typified by chronic weight loss leading to death. There is no known relationship between CWD and any other TSE of animals or people. Species known to be susceptible to CWD via natural routes of transmission include Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, black-tailed deer and moose.

In the United States, CWD has been confirmed in free-ranging deer and elk in Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming, and, as of October 2008, in 32 farmed elk herds and 11 farmed or captive white-tailed deer herds in Colorado, Kansas, Michigan Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The disease was first detected in U.S. farmed elk in 1997. It was also diagnosed in a wild moose in Colorado in 2005.

This proposed supplemental rule is scheduled to be published for public comment in the *Federal Register* on March 31.

Consideration will be given to comments received on before June 1. Send two copies of postal mail or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. 00-108-7, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 00-108-7. If you wish to submit a comment using the Internet go to the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2006-0118>.

Comments are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and may also be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817

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